H 75/987

Foreign Labor Trends

Honduras

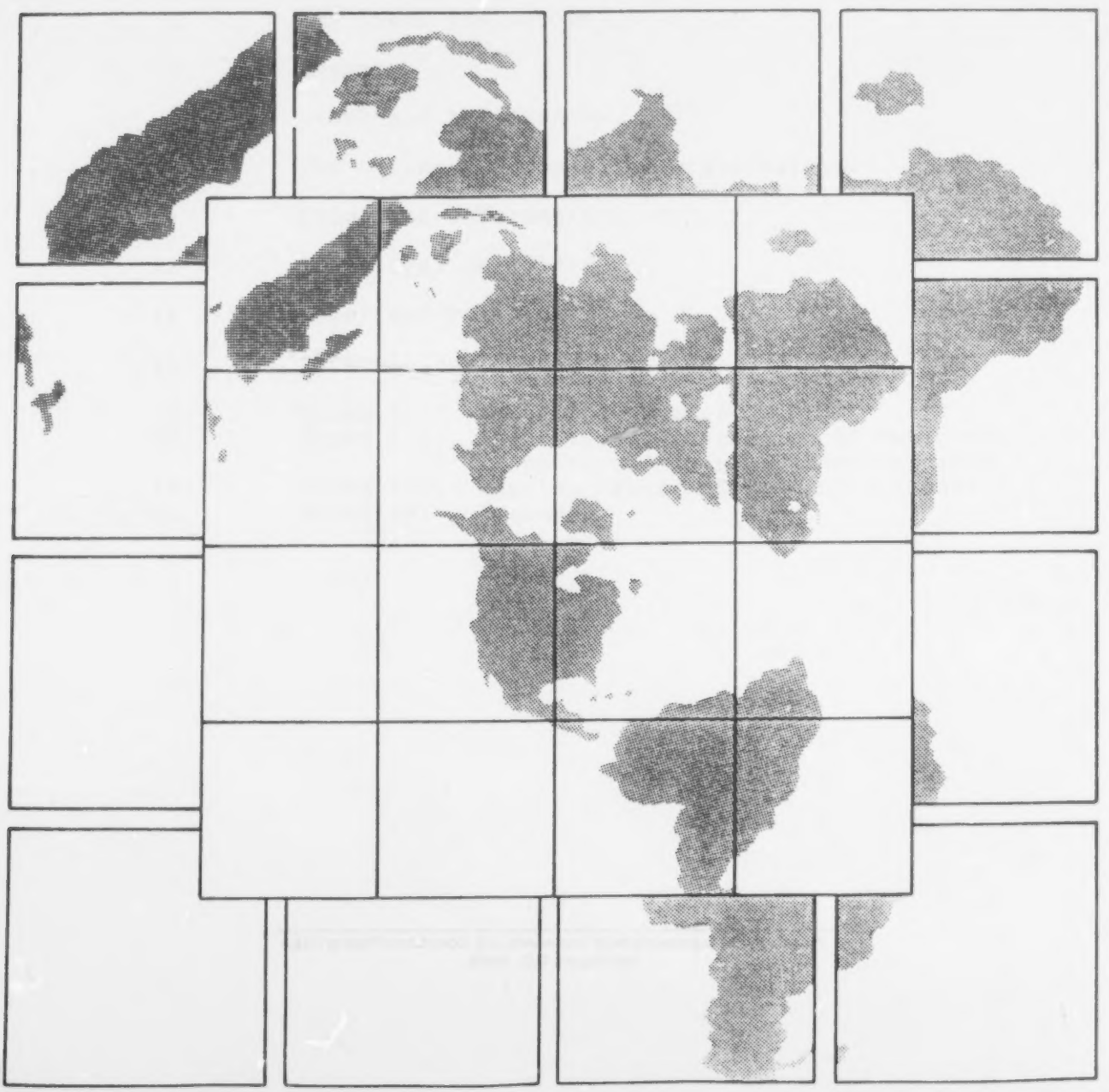
Released by
U.S. Department of Labor
Bureau of International Labor Affairs

Prepared by
American Embassy
TEGUCIGALPA

1987

FLT 89-28
Frequency: Annual

Supersedes: 87-27



y available

L 29.16:

For sale by the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office
Washington, D.C. 20402

FOREIGN LABOR TRENDS REPORT

HONDURAS

1987

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page		
1	Key Labor Indicators	
2	Summary	
4	Labor and the Economy	
6	The Unions and Campesino Organizations	
9	Labor and Government	
11	Industrial Relations	
12	Labor and Politics	
13	International Labor Relations	
15	Annex I:	Labor Code Summary
18	Annex II:	Requests for Suspension of Employment Contracts - January-December 1986
19	Annex III:	Leading Labor and Campesino Leaders
21	Annex IV:	Acronyms

KEY LABOR INDICATORS

	1986	1987	% Change
Per Capita GDP, Current US$	791	818	3.3
Total Population (thousands)	4,508	4,756	5.5
Urban population	1,749	1,922	9.8
Rural Population	2,758	2,834	2.7
Population growth (%)	3.5	3.5	--
Life expectancy (yrs)	62	62	--
Adult literacy (%)	43	43	--
Total labor force (thousands)	1,141	1,190	4.3
Work activity (thousands)			
Agriculture	833	962	15.4
Mining	2.2	5.4	145.4
Manufacturing	197	239	21.2
Construction	69	75	9.7
Utilities	5.3	5.6	5.6
Transport	60	70	17.5
Commerce	136	172	25.3
Banking	13	20	47.0
Others	203	246	21.0
Visible unemployment rate (pct)	14	12	-14.3
Visible unemployment equivalent of underemployment (pct)	2	2	--
Inflation rate (pct)	4.4		
Unionization rate, urban (1985)	40		
---, rural (1985)	20		
U.S. investments in Honduras (US$ millions)		277	
Trade with U.S. (US$ millions)			
U.S. exports to Honduras		440	31% of Honduras' total imports
Honduran exports to U.S.		675	43% of Honduras' total exports

Data in this table were supplied by the Banco Central, the General Directorate of Statistics & Census, and the World Factbook.

SUMMARY

The Honduran labor movement remains one of the strongest and best organized in the region. In recent years its role in the political life of the country has been less prominent, but it continues to be a key player in the political process and ranks as one of the principal institutions upon which Honduran democracy is based. Despite its periodic threats and efforts to confront the Honduran political leadership, labor generally acts cooperatively with the government, and most disputes are settled without major disruption. There are signs, however, that 2 years into the administration of President Azcona, labor is looking for more rewards than it has received to date.

The 300,000-strong Honduran labor movement is politically divided, and there are both personal rivalries among its leaders and ideological differences among the organizations themselves. The three principal organizations--the Confederation of Honduran Workers (CTH) (Social Democrat); the General Workers' Central (CGT) (nominally Christian Democrat); and the Unitary Federation of Honduran Workers (FUTH) (Marxist)--remain competitors notwithstanding earlier efforts to cooperate on issues of mutual concern.

Honduras, as the poorest country in Central America, is saddled with serious economic and social problems: illiteracy (over half of the population), poverty, malnutrition, and inadequate health care. The Honduran economy improved slightly in 1987, but serious underlying problems have yet to be attacked: unemployment and underemployment is estimated at about 14 percent of the work force; productivity, and therefore income, remains at a low level; real per capita gross domestic product (GDP) in 1987 was only marginally better than that attained 20 years before; the balance of trade has remained an intractable problem; and, the lempira is still a seriously overvalued currency.

Within the Honduran democratic framework respecting the freedoms of speech, press, and assembly, labor functions virtually without restraint. There have occasionally been charges by some labor leaders that the Government was interfering in the internal affairs of their organizations and that political partisanship was behind the dismissal of some public sector workers, but these allegations abated in 1987. For its part, the government has occasionally shown irritation with the bleating of the labor confederations complaining repeatedly about its failure to move more swiftly on a social agenda.

Honduras has remained a participant in international labor fora even though budgetary constraints limit involvement. This limitation has preventing it from sending a tripartite delegation to the International Labor Organization (ILO) in Geneva, but the government respects ILO jurisdiction in complaints of unfair practices. In addition to the AFL-CIO's American Institute for Free Labor Development (AIFLD), three West German foundations (Friedrich Ebert, Konrad Adenauer, and Friedrich Neuman) are also active. These provide trade union, cooperativism, and political training to the organized labor and campesino sectors.

LABOR AND THE ECONOMY

Generally considered the poorest country in Central America and in common with most other developing countries, Honduras seems unable to escape from its serious economic and social problems: illiteracy, poverty, malnutrition, and inadequate health care. Latest data for 1987 show the country with an estimated population of 4.5 million, a per capita GDP of slightly over $800, and an annual population growth rate of about 3.5 percent. While the Honduran economy has not been able to sustain a solid performance, the real GDP improved in 1987 for the second consecutive year, growing at about 4.2 percent.

The improvement in the economy has been offset by the high population growth rate, resulting in an overall drop of over 10 percent since 1979. Honduran real per capita GDP in 1987 is not much different from that attained in 1967. Inflation, measured in terms of the consumer price index (CPI), has slowed from an average annual rate of 9.2 percent from 1981 through 1983, under 5 percent for the 1984-1986 period, and about 2.5 percent for 1987.

According to Central Bank statistics, the Honduran work force numbered 1,189,900 workers in 1987 and is growing at an annual rate of 4.3 percent. Just under 55 percent of those that are listed as having jobs work in the agricultural sector. Of the remaining 45 percent, 13 percent are engaged in manufacturing, 10 percent in commerce, and 5 percent in construction. A slight but noticeable shift in the work of the labor force has occurred during the 1980s with a smaller share of workers occupied in agriculture and more involved in manufacturing, construction, and the service sector.

The government has had limited success in the difficult task of creating sufficient employment opportunities for both new entrants into the labor force and those workers who remain unemployed or underemployed. It has not been particularly creative in devising such opportunities, and its task has been made even more difficult by the reluctance of foreign investors to start up enterprises in Honduras. New intiatives are needed, but there is some doubt that these will be forthcoming in the near term. At the very least, it will require an increase in export earnings substantially better than performance over the past few years. In addition, administrative and legal impediments to expanding investment and production must be removed, labor costs must be kept competitive; and greater responsibility will have to be shown by labor leaders to demonstrate that Honduras has a work force willing to cooperate with new business.

Professional and middle level technicians are still in short supply despite increases in the number of secondary school, university, and professional training school graduates. This general problem notwithstanding, many professions seem to have an excess of personnel: the medical profession is a case in point, but because the physicians are selective about the parts of the country in which they will work, there are regional shortages in the face of surpluses in urban areas. Skilled craftsmen also seem to be in relatively short supply covering such jobs as electrician, plumber, carpenter, etc. One of the reasons for this is an inadequate number of vocational training facilities, but funding for developing these skills remains a problem.

The extent of unemployment in Honduras cannot be determined with any certainty. Like other countries in the region, Honduras lacks good data from which to work, and the "top of the head" figure for unemployment and underemployment is some 40-50 percent. Economists, some businesses, and other sources commonly use this range, but these numbers seem to be without statistical underpinnings. A more careful analysis of unemployment, using the same statistical measures that are used internationally for comparison purposes, shows that the rate is under 15 percent of the work force. The best estimate is provided by the General Directorate of Statistics and Census which shows a rate of visible unemployment of 12 percent. Underemployment is similarly a significant problem, and the best estimate of underemployment would produce an increase in the visible unemployment rate of about two percentage points. The combined rate is therefore approximately 14 percent.

During 1987, organized labor resumed its call for a major increase in the minimum wage which has not risen since 1983 when the government implemented a provision guaranteeing workers a "seventh day's pay for six days worked" and a "13th month's pay for 12 months worked." These had the practical effect of imposing salary increases of 16.7 percent and 8.3 percent respectively. Since that time, the government has called for austerity, though in 1987 there seemed to be some limited receptivity to the notion of an increase in wages. Workers covered by collective bargaining agreements have been able to negotiate wage increases of about 10 percent, but the number of contracts up for renewal in 1987 was small.

In general, labor has sometimes served as a disruptive force in the economy resulting from work stoppages that have been politically, rather than economically, motivated. During 1987, such political actions have affected the medical sector, the banana industry, transport, and various governmental institutions (including the schools, agricultural institute,

and public works), though the number of such disruptions was down from that of the previous year. In all of these labor actions, the issue was not wages or other terms of employment but matters such as replacing managerial personnel or interpretations of agreements. For 1987, the impact was relatively limited, though the strike at United Brands early in the year was costly for both the company and the nation's economy.

THE UNIONS AND CAMPESINO ORGANIZATIONS

The Honduran labor movement, now in its fourth decade, is usually considered one of the strongest and best organized in the region. It continues to maintain a very visible public presence, even while its vitality has flagged somewhat. The Ministry of Labor reports that there are now 223 active labor unions in Honduras, primarily associated with factories and commercial institutions. Two labor confederations and one labor federation claim to represent 20-30 percent of the total work force. These are the Confederation of Honduran Workers (CTH), linked to the Social Democrats; the General Workers' Central (CGT), nominally and tenuously affiliated with Christian Democracy; and the Unitary Federation of Honduran Workers (FUTH), which is Marxist. Many labor leaders have engaged in moonlighting with one of Honduras' four legally recognized parties (National, Liberal, National Innovation and Unity, and Christian Democrat), or, in the case of FUTH, with other political orgnizations without regard to the political philosophy of their own organization. This situation has sometimes led to charges of partisan or government interference in the internal affairs of unions. On the other side, however, it is evident that labor seeks active involvement in the political process so that the link between the parties and the confederations is encouraged by the membership.

The largest organization is the CTH which has an estimated 150,000 members in two major federations--the 50,000 member Federation of Unions of National Workers of Honduras (FESITRANH) and the 16,000 member Central Federation of Unions of Free Workers of Honduras (FECESITLIH); one campesino association, the National Association of Honduran Campesinos (ANACH), which claims to represent some 80,000 members; and some direct union affiliates. A new federation, the Federation of National Maritime Unions of Honduras (FESIMANH), was established in 1987 bringing together some 2,200 members from various small unions. Further, the textile union TEXHONSA initiated discussions with the CTH on the possibility of joining the Confederation. The CTH is affiliated with the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU), the

Inter-American Regional Workers Organization (ORIT), and the Central American Workers Confederation (CTC). As such, the CTH receives aid from the American Institute for Free Labor Development (AIFLD) and the Friedrich Ebert Foundation (of the Federal Republic of Germany) to implement training and educational programs for its membership. Andres Victor Artiles and Mariano de Jesus Gonzalez continue to serve as Secretary-General and President, respectively. During 1987, the two principal federations of the CTH held congresses. In April, FESITRANH reelected Francisco Guerrero to his fourth term as president. Following a scandal and a thorough housecleaning in FECESITLIH, Rodolfo Ferrufino was elected president and Jose Angel Meza chosen secretary-general.

The other major labor confederation, the CGT, has continued its drift away from the Christian Democrats as their political party in Honduras (PDCH) has moved further to the left. There have been recent hints that the PDCH might be ripe for internal reform and a return to a moderate course. Even if this were to happen, however, the current leadership of the CGT is linked so strongly to the National Party that a reestablishment of relations with the PDCH would not appear very likely. Marco Tulio Cruz continues to lead the 135,000 members of the CGT. While much of the membership, like Cruz himself, is Nationalist in political orientation, the CGT has continued its link to the Christian Democrat Latin American Central of Workers (CLAT) and the World Confederation of Labor (WCL). Among the CGT's affiliates are the estimated 80,000 members who are in the National Campesino Union (UNC) which, decades after its founding, was officially recognized in 1984. This delay was the result of suspicions that the UNC, and to a certain extent the CGT, had members actively assisting insurgents in Honduras. These allegations were totally unproven, and both organizations have established good and cooperative relations with both the civilian and military leaders of Honduras. In fact, the only labor leader to accompany President Azcona on his visit to the United States in 1986 was Felicito Avila, then secretary-general of the CGT. The president also attended the last congress of the CGT, just as he attended that of the CTH. The Confederation has suffered some ups and downs in membership that left it in about the same position at the end of the year that it enjoyed at the outset. The closing of the El Mochito mine in April resulted in the dissolution of its union, SOEM. Similarly, the abandonment of a number of meat packing plants caused the collapse of CGT's FESTRALH affiliate; later in the year, it was reconstituted as FENATRANH adding some tobacco, beverage, and sugar workers in the process. In addition, the Union of Workers of the National Agrarian Institute (SITRAINA) joined CGT in June, and negotiations are currently underway with two teachers' unions which seem likely to affiliate during this year.

FUTH is a Marxist labor organization, of which many leaders were trained in the Soviet Union, Cuba, or Eastern Europe. The public positions taken by FUTH are consistently anti-United States, it has opposed Honduran foreign policy and support for the United States, and it maintains affiliations with Marxist labor organizations throughout the world. Its international links include memberships in the World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU) and the Central American Commttee of Trade Union Unity (CUSCA). A realistic estimation of FUTH's membersip is under 15,000, though the Federation claims twice that number. In fact, FUTH's membership has been on the decline recently with the defections, noted above, of TEXHONSA and SITRAINA in 1987. Of course, membership alone is not a full reflection of FUTH's influence since affiliates include unions of the electric company (STENEE), the water works (SITRASANAA), university workers (SITRAUNAH), and the brewery workers (STIBYS). The Federation also maintains ties with FUNACAMH, a small campesino organization of the far left, composed principally of disaffected former members of ANACH and UNC. Through its participation in the Coordinating Committee of Popular Organizations (CCOP), FUTH joins forces with a variety of splinter leftist groups for political purposes, but its actions during the year were not noteworthy. FUTH failed to win any public relations successes during the year, and even its participation in May Day activities lacked a spark. The Federation's speakers rehashed old themes which could not attract much of a following. The FUTH congress held in 1987 was similarly lackluster, and its leaders were reelected to a new term without controversy.

The independent Federation of Cooperatives of Agrarian Reform of Honduras (FECORAH) has some 22,000 campesino members. Although a moderate voice, it has rather limited influence until it joins forces with CTH and CGT counterparts. Nelly Ramirez continued as president.

During the last decade, numerous small labor and campesino organizations, such as the Federation of Honduran Workers (FTH), made up of disaffected former members of FECESITLIH, and the National Central of Authentic Campesinos of Honduras (CENACH) started by former ANACH leaders, have risen and fallen. With the exception of the National Central of Farm Workers (CNTC), they have played a very minor role in Honduran political and economic life. The CNTC, established in 1985, brought together several small campesino organizations with a Marxist bent: the National Union of Authentic Campesinos of Honduras (UNCAH); the Unitarian Federation of Campesino Cooperatives of Honduras (FUNCACH); the National Front of Independent Campesinos of Honduras (FRENACAINH); and the National Union of Popular Cooperatives of Honduras (UNACOOPH). Though the CNTC leadership denies that it is close to FUTH, the two groups work together in the CCOP and in other fora.

The National Council of Workers and Farmers of Honduras (CONOCH) was established in 1986 as an umbrella organization for a broad spectrum of Honduran labor groups. It has failed to live up to expectations. There were times during 1987 when labor leaders invoked the name of CONOCH (and thereby the entire labor movement) to try to win concessions from or make points with the government, but in reality CONOCH was not permitted to prosper. While its representatives will occasionally meet, the individual confederations and other labor bodies have refused to cede any authority to CONOCH with the result that when its officials make pronouncements, they are speaking only for themselves and perhaps the constituent labor group from which they come. Late in 1987, CTH and CGT leaders again began to talk of the reactivation of CONOCH as spokesman for all of labor, but it is questionable that the confederations will ever give up the authority they now hold.

LABOR AND GOVERNMENT

Labor and government have continued to spar but more like friendly rivals than real enemies. The two sides respect each other's position and need one another. For that reason, the honeymoon that labor offered President Azcona in 1986 seemed to continue through the following year, despite the rhetoric of some labor leaders. As the year started, there was the expectation that the government would finally begin to deliver on some of the promises made in the heat of the 1985 presidential election campaign. The Government did not live up to those hopes but, except for some trouble in the health and agrarian sectors, labor moderates prevailed.

In January 1987, the union of public hospital workers (SITRAMEDHYS) called a nationwide strike involving nearly 6,000 workers over the issue of incorporating some 2,100 workers into the civil service. After about a week, the president agreed to the demand, but implementation did not come until late in the year. In the interim, there were other strikes and labor disruptions in hospitals over various issues and concerning different elements of the health worker population. For example, in November new demands were raised for increases in wages for the lowest levels of unskilled hospital workers, a group which had not received a raise for several years. Following a 2-week strike, the government approved a pay hike acceptable to the workers. Such activity kept the public medical sector at a steady boil virtually throughout the year, though essential services continued without a break.

Another conflict with the government arose over the work of the National Agrarian Institute (INA). The discontent arose prior to 1987 and continued well past its end, generally over

INA's non-performance, in the view of campesino and labor groups. By March 1987, several groups felt that the government of President Azcona had had enough time to expand the implementation of land titling, financing, and debt forgiveness that had been expected under the administration's agrarian reform program. After campesinos seized INA offices in protest, the government acted aggressively to restore order and was in less of a compromising spirit. While it temporarily calmed the waters by agreeing to examine some of the campesinos' points, the president refused to replace the INA director, as agrarian workers had demanded, until his continued tenure became a source of further irritation in 1988.

The government has cooperated with labor to initiate a program of exporting Honduran workers to the United States under terms of American immigration reform legislation. Throughout 1987, organized labor and the unemployed were anxious to take advantage of this program, and as a result, charlatans set up operations charging fees for placements which were never to occur. There were even allegations that senior officials of the Ministry of Labor were involved in questionable dealings, though these charges were not proven. While no Honduran workers were sent to the United States on this short-term employment program in 1987, there was optimism that as many as several thousand people might go in 1988.

Also in 1987, Honduras was host to a preparatory meeting of the Central American Development Organization (CADO). This initiative, proposed in the 1983 report of the National Bipartisan Commission on Central America, is strongly endorsed by U.S. labor, and it also has some support from the CTH. The March meeting was the first time that government, labor, and business sectors joined together on the project, and representatives from the United States and all the Central American countries attended. Some progress was made in that governments accepted the concept of sharing responsibility in economic and social areas with private sector groups, both labor and business. There were other sticking points, however, and CADO is still far from realization.

Honduran labor remains disappointed that President Azcona has not been as responsive to its demands as it had been led to believe. There is nevertheless an open, cooperative spirit to the relationship. The president's door has been open to labor leaders who have often come in to air their views, make deals, and prevent problems from getting out of hand. By agreeing to pay workers for all or part of their lost wages during some strike actions, the government has set a bad precedent though arguably this had turned down the thermostat in labor-management relations. Azcona, non-confrontational by

nature, has pacified the moderate leadership, even as he has not been able to satisfy it completely. He may even be able to take credit, by working with labor's moderates, for keeping the radicals of FUTH somewhat isolated from the mainstream of the Honduran labor movement.

INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

Statistics from the Ministry of Labor show that in 1987 there were 42 requests for suspension of workers by 40 firms. These affected 2,759 employees for a total of 4,185 workdays lost. Of these, 11 requests were granted, 1 was denied, 4 were withdrawn, and 26 were still pending. These figures were up somewhat from those of 1986.

For 1986, the last year for which data are available, the Ministry conciliated 23,139 individual conflicts, investigated 767 work-related accidents, inscribed 112 new executive boards, approved 207 health and safety agreements, prosecuted 286 cases before the labor courts, and sent 3,141 summonses to employers for alleged violations of the labor code.

Honduras enjoyed another relatively calm year of industrial relations in 1987, though it again appeared that political and social issues may have played as large a part in labor disputes as did economic concerns. For example, 1987 began with the strike by SITRATERCO against the American-owned United Brands Company over an interpretation of the law on payment of the annual thirteenth month's pay. Although there was certainly a financial element involved, it may well have been that the union's executive board majority was merely flexing its muscles in preparation for the SITRATERCO election which occurred later in the year. Although the Ministry of Labor and other knowledgeable officials came down on the side of the company's interpretation, Congress voted in support of the union's reading of the law. The strike, which was called before Congress intervened, was costly for the company, workers, and even the government which lost revenues on fees and taxes associated with the export of bananas.

In March 1987, a strike by the textile union TEXHONSA, broke out over the dismissal of some employees and the union's demand for reinstatement. TEXHONSA, at the time an affiliate of FUTH, was not inclined to negotiate a settlement; and the strike lasted a week before the Ministry of Labor declared the action illegal, a move that historically has not been made very often. Workers returned to the job, but internal problems involving the wisdom of the strike led to the withdrawal of TEXHONSA from the ranks of FUTH unions.

One of the more significant changes on the labor scene during 1987 was the aftermath of an industrial dispute that was resolved the previous year. The union of the El Mochito mine (SOEM) went on strike in 1986, and given the high wage rates and low productivity of the workers, this move resulted in savings to the company for each day that employees were off the job. It became clear to the mine's ownership that the massive losses it had been incurring could not be contained, and the mine shut down in April 1987. While the payment of some $6 million in severance pay gave a one-time boost to the local economy, the closure of the mine turned a once prosperous community into something of a ghost town as over 1,000 mine workers lost their jobs. By October, a buyer was found to reopen the mine under a tighter rein. The union has not been reconstituted, and given the animus of so many workers toward the last leaders of SOEM, it may not be.

LABOR AND POLITICS

Last year was midway between the 1985 and 1989 presidential elections. As a result, labor took a breather in political activity. Labor leaders have their favorites in the Liberal or National Parties, but they did not publicly take partisan positions on candidates who were battling it out in advance of the primary elections. Instead, labor leaders of all stripes seemed united in calls for a more effective government under President Azcona and urged him to change members of his cabinet. The discontent was not directed particularly against Labor Minister Adalberto Discua, a member of the National Party who has had previous experience in the post under earlier military governments. Nonetheless, Discua did not have an especially good year, having lost face in various ways with the president directly intervening in labor disputes, disagreeing with his interpretation of labor law, and otherwise undermining his authority. In 1987, the National Party broke off the cooperative agreement it had maintained with the governing Liberals since the start of the Azcona administration. This gave rise to speculation that Discua (as well as the Foreign Minister, also from the National Party) would depart his post. This did not occur, however.

May Day 1987 was also quiet, in marked contrast to what had taken place the previous year. Calls for an increase in the minimum wage and for some changes in the labor code were not exactly the kind of rallying cries designed to bring out a massive and enthusiastic crowd. The CTH and CGT, burned somewhat from earlier cooperation with the leftists of FUTH, conducted their rallies separately in different towns in the north and far from San Pedro Sula where FUTH was gathering.

That federation produced a spectacle predictably anti-American. The Honduran Government, military, and political parties also came in for FUTH criticism for supporting U.S. policy in the region. The rallies did not get out of hand, however, because many potential troublemakers were in police custody for appropriating official vehicles and for causing damage to public property. While the FUTH members involved did not deny the charges, they saw the arrests as politically motivated.

FUTH, active in the creation of leftist front groups such as the Honduran Popular Movement (MPH) and the CCOP, has repeatedly tried to bring politics into labor, perhaps as a means of offsetting its lack of success in dealing with meat-and-potatoes labor issues. Anti-government and anti-U.S. Government themes pervade these groups' speeches and publications, but FUTH has had very little success in attracting Honduran workers to its cause. Honduran labor remains fundamentally conservative, interested more in straightforward wage and benefits issues than in rallies and politics.

As a means of raising labor's political consciousness, AIFLD is seeking to play a role in programming funds made available by the National Endowment for Democracy (NED) for political education. Some members of congress have come from the ranks of labor, and AIFLD would like to see, among other things, greater cross-fertilization as a means of increasing labor's clout.

INTERNATIONAL LABOR RELATIONS

The CTH and CGT, as well as FUTH, maintain ties with philosophically compatible international labor organizations. The CTH, for example, is closely affiliated with the ICFTU and ORIT. The CTH is also linked to the non-Marxist Central American Workers' Confederation (CTC). The rival CGT has continued its association with the WCL and to CLAT, even as it becomes closer to the National Party and more distant from the Christian Democrats. The Marxist FUTH is affiliated with the WFTU and to CUSCA.

Budgetary constraints have made it difficult for Honduras to remain active in international labor affairs. While it has not been able to send a tripartite delegation to the ILO conventions in Geneva for several years, the nation has been represented by its Ambassador to Switzerland. The Ministry of Labor's Division of International Affairs has tried to maintain a close watch on international labor developments,

and it has prepared the Honduran responses to charges of violations of trade union rights presented before the ILO's Committee on Freedom of Association. One such charge was presented to the ILO by SOEM in 1987, but the collapse of that union, as the result of the aforementioned closure of the El Mochito mine, has made the case moot.

International assistance on matters of trade unionism, cooperativism, and political affairs is provided by several foreign organizations. AIFLD has been active in the area of campesino education and institution building for over 30 years. It has received NED funds for non-sectarian political education courses, and throughout 1987 it was working to develop a campesino cooperative project which is to be funded through the U.S. Agency for International Development.

Three West German foundations have also been providing labor assistance in Honduras. The best known is the Friedrich Ebert Foundation (FEF) which represents the German Social Democrat Party and which has been in Honduras since 1982. It has been involved in small agro-industrial projects, trade union educational programs, and research into Honduran socioeconomic and political problems. In contrast, however, to AIFLD which confines its activities to CTH and its affiliates, the FEF deals with all Honduran labor organizations from the democratic CGT to the Marxist FUTH. The other two German foundations, Friedrich Nauman and Konrad Adenauer, have been less active. The Israeli Histadrut has also invited a number of Honduran labor and campesino leaders to participate in its programs.

These organizations have been responsible for training and assisting hundreds of Honduran trade union and campesino leaders. They have attended courses and seminars in Honduras, and many have been able to participate in study programs in the United States, Germany, Costa Rica, Venezuela, and Israel where they learn about indigenous labor movements or receive specialized training. On the other side, FUTH leaders have often been trained in Cuba, East Germany, or other bloc countries.

ANNEX I

LABOR CODE SUMMARY

An individual work contract requires:

(A) the observance of the obligations, rights and duties as prescribed by the labor code or by international agreements which Honduras may have signed or ratified;

(B) the consequences which may derive from the contract itself, in accordance with good faith, equity, local usage, custom, or the law.

Work hours

Shift	Day	Night	Mixed
Period	0500-1900	1900-0500	Overlapping Day and Night
Not to exceed	8 hours/day 44 hours/week	6 hours/day 36 hours/week	Less than 3 hours a night
Normal Week	44 hours (pay 56)		

Vacations:

Every worker shall have one day of rest per week, preferably Sunday, for every six days' work. The legal holidays are: January 1, April 14, May 1, September 15, October 3, October 12, October 21, and December 25, and the Thursday, Friday, and Saturday before Easter Sunday.

Every worker has the right to yearly paid vacations; length will depend on the number of years worked, as follows:

Years Worked	Consecutive Workdays of Vacation
1 year	10 days
2 years	12 days
3 years	15 days
4 years	20 days

The worker cannot use his vacation to work for another company.

Rates of Pay

Rates are subject to employer-employee agreements but cannot be less than stipulated by the minimum wage law.

Salaries may be paid monthly, biweekly, daily, or hourly.

Maternity Leave

Women employees are entitled to maternity leave for 4 weeks before giving birth and 6 weeks after birth.

Indemnification

On termination of a contract, an employee is entitled to an amount of severance pay equal to 1 month's pay for workers on the job from 1-2 years or 2 months' for workers on the job over 2 years, plus another month's pay for every year up to 8 years, calculated on the basis of the average pay for the last 6 months.

Table of Minimum Wages

Daily pay rates US$	Tegucigalpa/ San Pedro Sula	Elsewhere in the country
Manufacturing:		
1-5 workers	2.65	2.65
6 or more workers	3.30	2.75
Agriculture, Cattle Farming, Dairy:		
1-5 workers	2.30	2.30
6 or more workers	2.50	2.50
Refined Petroleum and By-products	3.55	3.55
Mining	3.30	3.30
Construction	2.65	2.65
Wholesalers and retailers, hotels and restaurants:		
1-5 workers	2.65	2.65
6 or more workers	3.30	2.75

Daily pay rates US$	Tegucigalpa/ San Pedro Sula	Elsewhere in the country
Transportation and warehousing	3.30	2.75
Maintenance and repair of railroad, loading and unloading goods in ports, maintenance, repair of ships	3.55	3.55
Financial activities	3.30	2.75
Community, social and personal services	3.30	2.65

Social Security is on the basis of employee and employer contributions.

Up to 10 percent of total employees may be foreigners.

ANNEX II

Requests for Suspension of Employment Contracts
January-December 1987

	Total Requests for Suspensions	Number of Companies	Number of Workers Affected	Number of days of Suspension
Total	41	39	2,756	4,245
- Granted	11	10	354	1,200
Denied	1	1	56	120
- Withdrawn	4	4	128	480
- In process	25	24	2,218	1,165

(Source: Labor Ministry, Statistical Department)

ANNEX III

Leading Labor and Campesino Leaders

CTH: Central American Workers Confederation
(Confederacion de Trabajadores de Honduras)

President:	Mariano de Jesus Gonzalez
Secretary-General:	Andres Victor Artiles

ANACH: National Association of Honduran Campesinos
(Asociacion Nacional de Campesinos Hondurenos)

President:	Luis Lagos
Vice President:	Mariano Marcia
Secretary-General:	Jorge Antonio Hernandez

FECESITLIH Central Federation of Unions of Free Workers of Honduras
(Federacion Central de Sindicatos de Trabajadores Libres de Honduras)

President:	Rodolfo Ferrufino Lira
Secretary-General:	Jose Angel Meza

FESITRANH Federation of Unions of National Workers of Honduras
(Federacion de Sindicatos de Trabajadores Nacionales de Honduras)

President:	Francisco Guerrero
Secretary-General:	Mario Quintanilla

SITRATERCO Union of Tela Railroad Workers
(Sindicato de Trabajadores de la Tela Railroad)

President:	Luis Yanez
Secretary-General:	Armando Galdamex

SUTRASFCO Standard Fruit Company Workers Union
(Sindicato de Trabajadores de la Standard Fruit Company)

President:	Carlos Flores Garrido
Secretary-General:	Mauricio F. Gonzales

CGT:	General Workers' Central (Central General de Trabajadores)	
	Secretary-General:	Marco Tulio Cruz
	Asst. Secretary-General	Oscar Escalante
	Asst. Secretary-General	Julio Chavez Paz
	Asst. Secretary-General	Felicito Avila Ordonez
UNC:	National Campesino Union (Union Nacional de Campesinos)	
	Secretary-General	Victor Peralta
	Asst. Secretary-General:	Marcial Caballero
FUTH:	Unitary Federation of Honduran Workers (Federacion Unitaria de Trabajadores de Honduras)	
	President:	Hector Hernandez
	Vice President:	Carlos Reyes
	Secretary-General:	Roger Barbados
FECORAH	Federation of Cooperatives of Agrarian Reform of Honduras (Federacion de Cooperativas de Reforma Agraria de Honduras)	
	President:	Nelly Ramirez

ANNEX IV

ACRONYMS

AIFLD	American Institute for Free Labor Development
ANACH	National Association of Honduran Campesinos
CADO	Central American Development Organization
CCOP	Coordinating Committee of Popular Organizations
FECORAH	Federation of Cooperatives of Agrarian Reform of Honduras
CENACH	National Central of Authentic Campesinos of Honduras
CGT	General Workers' Central
CLAT	Latin American Central of Workers
CNTC	National Central of Farm Workers
CONOCH	The National Council of Workers and Farmers of Honduras
CPI	Consumer price index
CTC	Central American Workers Confederation
CTH	Confederation of Honduran Workers
CUSCA	Central American Committee of Trade Union Unity
FECESITLIH	Central Federation of Unions of Free Workers of Honduras
FECORAH	Federation of Cooperatives of Agrarian Reform of Honduras
FEF	Friedrich Ebert Foundation
FENATRANH	(meat packing, tobacco, beverage, and sugar workers)
FESIMANH	Federation of National Maritime Unions of Honduras
FESITRANH	Federation of Unions of National Workers of Honduras
FESTRALH	(meat packing workers--superseded by FENATRANH)
FRENACAINH	National Front of Independent Campesinos of Honduras
FRG	Federal Republic of Germany
FTH	Federation of Honduran Workers
FUNACAMH	(a small campesino organization)
FUNCACH	Unitarian Federation of Campesino Cooperatives of Honduras
FUTH	Unitary Federation of Honduran Workers
GDP	Gross domestic product
ICFTU	International Confederation of Free Trade Unions
ILO	International Labor Organization
INA	National Agrarian Institute
MPH	Honduran Popular Movement
NED	National Endowment for Democracy
ORIT	Inter-American Regional Workers Organization
PDCH	Christian Democratic Party
SITRAINA	Union of Workers of the National Agrarian Institute
SITRAMEDHYS	(public hospital workers union)
SITRASANAA	(the water workers union)
SITRATERCO	Union of Tela Railroad Workers
SITRAUNAH	(university workers union)
SOEM	(El Mochito mine workers union)
STENEE	(electric company workers union)
STIBYS	(brewery workers union)
SUTRASFCO	Standard Fruit Company Workers Union
TEXHONSA	(textile union)
UNACOOPH	National Union of Popular Cooperatives of Honduras
UNC	National Campesino Union
UNCAH	National Union of Authentic Campesinos of Honduras
WCL	World Confederation of Labor
WFTU	World Federation of Trade Unions

* U.S. Government Printing Office: 1989-241-398/00003

Superintendent of Documents Subscriptions Order Form

Order Processing Code
*6314

Charge your order. It's easy!

☐ **YES,** please send me the following indicated subscriptions:

_____subscriptions of FOREIGN LABOR TRENDS, FLT, for $53.00 each domestic subscription per year; $66.25 each foreign subscription per year.

1. The total cost of my order is $_____ . All prices include regular domestic postage and handling and are subject to change. International customers please add 25%.

Please Type or Print

2. _____
(Company or personal name)

_____
(Additional address/attention line)

_____
(Street address)

_____
(City, State, ZIP Code)

(_____)_____
(Daytime phone including area code)

3. **Please choose method of payment:**

☐ Check payable to the Superintendent of Documents

☐ GPO Deposit Account ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐-☐

☐ VISA, CHOICE or MasterCard Account

☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐

_____
(Credit card expiration date)

Thank you for your order!

_____
(Signature)

4. **Mail To:** Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402-9371